

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A conveyor drum for receiving axially aligned articles that are conveyed in a cross-axial direction toward said conveyor drum, said conveyor drum comprising:

a lifting device for changing a longitudinal axial spacing of the articles by a predetermined longitudinal axial lift; and

an adjustment device structured and arranged to adjust the predetermined longitudinal axial lift.

2. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1, wherein said conveyor drum is structured and arranged in a tobacco processing apparatus.

3. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1, wherein a lifting device is positioned to act on each fed row of articles.

4. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1, wherein said lifting device comprises at least one wobble plate.

5. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 4, wherein said wobble plate is structured to be displaceable.

6. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 5, wherein said wobble plate is displaceable in a longitudinal axial manner parallel to the articles.

7. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 5, wherein said wobble plate is angularly displaceable, such that an angle between a rotational axis of said wobble plate and a rotational axis of said conveyor drum is changeable.

8. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 7, wherein said at least one wobble plate comprises a plurality of wobble plates, and, for each wobble plate, the angle between a rotational axis of each wobble plate and the rotational axis of said conveyor drum is changeable.

9. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 4, further comprising a drive for said at least one wobble plate.

10. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1, wherein said adjustment device is assigned to said at least one wobble plate.

11. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1, further comprising seats structured and arranged to move in the longitudinal axial direction.

12. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1, wherein at least two seats are arranged for articles on a moveable carriage.

13. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 12, wherein said at least two seats or said carriage are connected to a wobble plate.

14. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 12, wherein said at least two seats or said carriage are connected to said wobble plate by a ball joint.

15. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1, wherein said conveyor drum is structured as a spreading drum.

16. The conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1, wherein said conveyor drum is formed as a sliding drum.

17. A machine of the tobacco processing industry comprising at least one conveyor drum in accordance with claim 1.

18. A process of changing longitudinal axial spacing between axially aligned articles moving in a cross-axial direction, comprising:

placing the articles on positionably adjustable seats;

changing a spacing between the positionably adjustable seats within a predetermined range; and

adjusting the predetermined range, whereby the spacing between the positionably adjustable seats is changed to the adjusted predetermined range.

19. The process in accordance with claim 18, wherein said process is performed by a conveyor drum.

20. The process in accordance with claim 19, wherein the adjusting of the predetermined range comprises changing the position of at least one wobble plate located within the conveyor drum.

21. The process in accordance with claim 20, wherein the changing of the position of at least one wobble plate comprises adjusting a longitudinal position of the at least one wobble plate within the conveyor drum.

22. The process in accordance with claim 20, wherein the changing of the position of at least one wobble plate comprises adjusting an angular position of the at least one wobble plate within the conveyor drum.

23. An apparatus to perform the process of claim 18, said apparatus comprising:

a plurality of aligned positionably adjustable seats;

a lifting device coupled to said plurality of aligned positionably adjustable seats; and

an adjustment device coupled to said lifting device.

24. The apparatus in accordance with claim 23, wherein said lifting device comprises at least one wobble plate to which said plurality of aligned positionably adjustable seats are coupled; and

wherein said adjustment device is coupled to displace said at least one wobble plate.

25. The apparatus in accordance with claim 24, wherein said adjustment device is structured and arranged to displace said at least one wobble plate at least one of linearly and angularly.